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*This pamphlet was developed to assist people who are uncertain about how to find and work with a lawyer. It is the first time that a pamphlet for consumers of lawyers' services has been published in the District of Columbia. If you have any comments, or any problems with our suggestions, please call the Citizens' Advisory Committee of the D.C. Bar at 638-1500.*

*The D.C. Bar has a new Lawyer Referral and Information Service, available to consult with consumers, regardless of financial means, to help them determine if they have legal problems, and, if so, to make referrals to lawyers. Phone 638-1509.*

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#### • Finding a Lawyer

There is no guaranteed single method of finding a "perfect" lawyer. But if you act as an informed consumer, you should be able to find a lawyer with whom you can work effectively. You can make it easier for yourself in dealing with a worrisome legal problem and you may save money.

This pamphlet is written primarily for people who can afford to pay at least a minimum fee for a lawyer's services. The information in this pamphlet about how lawyers work can be useful to anyone who needs a lawyer's assistance.

If you cannot afford to pay an attorney, there are many organizations that offer free or reduced-fee legal assistance. You may be eligible for their programs depending on your income. There is a short list of these organizations in the back of this pamphlet.

A more complete description of these organizations is provided in the back of the *Lawyer Directory*, which is available at your public library and at local book stores. In addition you can . . .

*Phone the D.C. Bar at 638-1509 and ask the Public Service Activities Office to mail you a list of organizations which provide legal services. When you receive it, contact the organizations yourself.*

For further assistance, you can . . .  
*Phone the Lawyer Referral and Information Service of the D.C. Bar at 638-1509.*

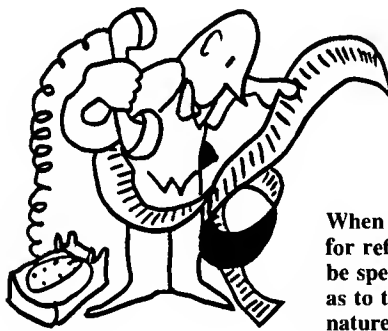
#### ASSEMBLING A LIST OF LAWYERS

If you can afford to pay, there are many ways to find a lawyer. You can use the D.C. Bar's Lawyer Referral and Information Service, *Lawyer Register* or *Lawyer Directory*; you can seek referrals from friends, pro-

professional persons, the voluntary Bar Association, or law school clinical programs; you can consult public interest organizations, prepaid legal services programs or advertisements. We describe these options below.

We suggest that you use these various methods of finding a lawyer to assemble a list of lawyers. Then, telephone the lawyers on your list and talk with them or their office staff. Talking with several lawyers will help you understand the choice of legal services available to you. Based on the phone calls, select the lawyer who seems best for you. Then make an appointment to talk face-to-face.

When asking for referrals, be specific as to the nature of your problem and your budget limitations.



**When asking for referrals, be specific as to the nature of your problem and your budget limitations.**

#### **Lawyer Referral Services**

The D.C. Bar, also called the Unified Bar, is the largest Bar organization in Washington, and every attorney licensed to practice in the District must belong to it.

The D.C. Bar has established a Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS) designed to help people who need lawyers. Its staff has primary responsibility for providing referrals to qualified lawyers. The LRIS staff

is also available to provide key information, such as whether a legal problem exists, what a lawyer can or cannot do about it, and some idea of how the law may apply in each case. LRIS knows about other legal service and social service organizations in D.C. which may be able to help if you are eligible for them or if your problem is determined not to be a legal one. If you have questions about whether you have a legal problem and feel hesitant about whether to go to a lawyer, call LRIS and talk over your questions.

If it is determined that you need a lawyer, you will be given information, including fee information, about three lawyers. If you meet income qualifications, you may be eligible for reduced fees. The three lawyers about whom information is provided are chosen by rotation among those lawyers who have met basic experience standards in a broad area of the law. Be sure that the attorney you choose has experience with your specific type of legal problem.

After you have chosen the one of the three recommended lawyers who sounds best to you, the LRIS staff will make an appointment for you with that attorney. The lawyer will provide a half-hour consultation for \$15, which will be sent to LRIS to cover its administrative costs. Any additional fee for further services will be arranged between you and the lawyer.

Once you have employed a lawyer referred by LRIS, the LRIS staff is available to discuss problems. LRIS monitors client satisfaction and the cost of the lawyer's services.

If you are interested in this referral service. . .

*Call the Director of the Lawyer Re-*

*referral and information service at 638-1509 to ask about LRIS.*

The Bar Association of D.C. (a voluntary Bar Association, not connected with the D.C. Bar) also provides a Lawyer Referral Service (LRS). The LRS will arrange an appointment for you with an attorney who has agreed to take cases in certain areas of the law. The lawyer will provide a half-hour consultation for \$15, which is used by LRS to pay for its expenses. Any additional fees will be agreed to between you and the lawyer. If you are interested in this referral service. . .

*Phone the Lawyer Referral Service of the Bar Association of D.C. at 223-1484, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.*

Prior to going to the appointment made by the D.C. Bar's LRIS or the Bar Association's LRS, we suggest that you phone the lawyer's office and ask the questions that are on page 9, so that you can compare this lawyer with others on your list.

The D.C. Bar also has a *Lawyer Directory* and a *Lawyer Register*. The *Lawyer Directory*, a paperbound book, can be found in public libraries and bookstores. It provides information which lawyers have voluntarily supplied about themselves. The *Lawyer Register* provides the same information in a more complete and up-to-date form, but can be reviewed only at the offices of the D.C. Bar. Both the *Lawyer Register* and the *Lawyer Directory* list attorneys according to the areas of law in which they will accept cases, such as consumer law, family law, and tax law. They also include other information useful in selecting a lawyer; for example, infor-

mation about fees, the lawyer's education, and foreign languages spoken by the lawyer. Most lawyers indicate their fee for the initial interview, and some indicate that they make no charge. If you want to use the *Directory* or *Register*. . .

*The Lawyer Register may be reviewed without charge at the office of the D.C. Bar, 1426 H Street, N.W., Suite 840, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays. For more information, call 638-1509.*

*The Lawyer Directory is available at public libraries and bookstores. It can also be purchased from the D.C. Bar. Phone 638-1509 for information.*

To find lawyers to add to your list who are personally recommended, use one of the following methods.

#### **Referrals from Professionals or Friends**

If possible, ask for a recommendation from someone who had a problem similar to yours which was resolved satisfactorily. Or, ask another kind of professional like a doctor, a minister, a social worker or a business person who may have experience with your kind of problem.

#### **Public Interest Organizations**

Many public interest organizations provide legal services, often in specialized areas of the law. Some of them can refer you to lawyers who are the most experienced and qualified in their field. In the back of this pamphlet, there is a list of public interest organizations in the Washington area and their phone numbers. Those organizations that usually provide referrals are



marked with an asterisk. One organization, marked with two asterisks, is the Women's Legal Defense Fund. It offers both a referral service and counseling programs in the areas of divorce and other domestic relations matters, employment discrimination, credit counseling, and name changes.

#### **Law School Clinical Programs**

The clinical programs of Washington's six law schools provide law students with practical court experience, handling actual cases for persons who cannot afford a regular lawyer's fees. Some of the clinical programs may refer you to former students who did well in the program, who are now just starting in practice, and who may provide legal service at lower prices. In addition, the supervising attorney in each clinical program may be able to provide a good referral. He or she is often in court and has the opportunity to observe the performance of other lawyers. You can phone one or more of these law schools and ask for the law clinic program:

American University .....	686-3872
Antioch School of Law .....	265-9500
Catholic University .....	526-5800
George Washington University ..	676-7463
Georgetown University .....	624-8280
Howard University .....	686-6833

Be sure you are talking with the person who usually handles referrals. Some of the schools may be more helpful than others, so if you are not satisfied with one, try another.

#### **Pre-paid Legal Services**

Pre-paid legal services provide legal advice in exchange for a flat yearly or monthly fee. They are similar to many health insurance plans.

In the past, pre-paid legal service plans usually have been available only to groups, such as labor unions, credit unions, and cooperatives.

More recently, pre-paid legal service plans have become available to individual consumers. Some of these plans are excellent. Others promised too much for too low a payment and have gone out of business. If you find a pre-paid plan that interests you, inquire carefully about it. If you are interested in joining a pre-paid plan, or if you have questions about any specific plan. . .

*Contact  
the National Resource Center for  
Consumers of Legal Services  
by calling 659-8514  
or writing to:  
National Resource Center  
1302 18th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036*

#### **Advertisements**

In compiling your list of lawyers, you can also look at the advertisements in the newspaper, although advertising by lawyers is new and not yet widely used. If your problem is routine, this may be a method of finding a lawyer who will provide a service for a fixed fee. Legal clinics are likely to advertise frequently and some legal clinics work on a volume basis, using standardized forms, with the assistance of trained non-lawyers, called paralegals. These clinics are often able to handle routine legal problems at lower costs. Some of them advertise free initial consultations.

These methods should enable you to find the names of several lawyers with experience with your kind of problem. Call and talk with several of them before making your first appointment.

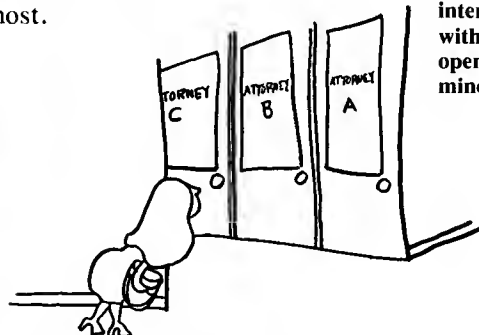
# **PHONING THE LAWYER'S OFFICE**

Before you make an appointment, call the offices of the lawyers on your list to get more information. When you call the lawyer's office, find out the name of the person with whom you are speaking. Describe your problem and ask briefly, but clearly. . .

1. *"Does the lawyer (or "Do you...") have experience with this kind of problem?"*
2. *"Does the lawyer charge for an initial interview?" If so, "How much?"*
3. *If you believe your problem is routine, "Does the lawyer have a standard fee for this kind of problem? What does that standard fee cover?"*
4. *If your problem is more complicated or the lawyer does not have a standard fee "What is the lawyer's hourly fee?"*
5. *"Does the lawyer provide a written agreement describing fees and the services provided for the fees?"*

Keep a list of the information and think about the answers you receive from the lawyers. Then call back to make an appointment with the attorney whose answers satisfied you the most.

**Plan to go to the first interview with an open mind.**



## • **The First Face-to-Face Interview**

Plan to go to the first interview with an open mind. You do not have to decide to employ the lawyer whom you are interviewing until you have had

time to think about the interview. Do not be rushed into signing a retainer agreement.

A lawyer works for you. He or she should be genuinely interested in your problem and in giving you the best possible advice. The lawyer may not be able to accomplish everything you wish because of the facts or the law that applies in your case. Many times a good lawyer will advise you to avoid court action. A lawyer should be able to explain, in terms you can understand, what he or she hopes to accomplish for you and how he or she plans to do it. Keep this in mind as you reflect on your impressions of your contacts with the lawyer and his or her staff.

#### **HOW TO WORK WITH A LAWYER**

Be organized in presenting your concerns to the lawyer. Lawyers spend years in law school and in law practice learning, among other things, how to approach a problem in a logical, well-organized manner. Most lawyers respond better to clients who are well-organized in interviews and phone conversations.

Remember also, a lawyer's time is his or her income. Be punctual for your interview and try to be unemotional in explaining your problem. When you go

Most  
lawyers  
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with you. . .

1. *A written summary or detailed notes outlining your problem.*
2. *Names, addresses and phone numbers of all parties and witnesses and their lawyers and insurance companies, if you know them.*
3. *All documents which you have received from lawyers, or a court or which may otherwise be important, for example: receipts, contracts, medical bills, repair estimates, checks, etc. (Some lawyers will ask you to deliver written materials in advance of your first interview in order to review them.)*

#### **THE COST OF THE INTERVIEW**

If you first spoke with someone else about the appointment, confirm the cost of the interview with the lawyer. Many charge for the initial interview at their usual hourly rate. In other cases, a reduced initial consultation fee may pay for only a short time with the lawyer. Make sure you understand the cost if the interview is going to take more time.

#### **THE LAWYER'S EXPERIENCE**

You will want to check on the lawyer's experience. Not all lawyers are experienced, expert and efficient with every subject. Usually, the hourly fee of an experienced lawyer is higher than that of an inexperienced lawyer, but if the experienced lawyer is more efficient, the cost may be less for you and the results better in the long run. However, a young lawyer may be more interested in your case, especially if it is routine, and may be just as effective. In any case, avoid the lawyer with a high hourly fee who is not experienced with your type of problem.

the lawyer's experience. If your case is going to involve a trial or administrative hearing, be sure the lawyer is experienced with these proceedings. Whomever you decide to hire, you should feel confident in him or her.

If you are working with a law firm, ask who will actually be working on your case and decide if you should talk directly with that person. If someone other than a partner, for example a young lawyer, an associate in a large firm, or a non-lawyer is doing the work, you should know about it and the cost of the service should be less. Here are some questions that you should ask:

*"Will you actually be working on my case, or should I talk with another person who will be doing the work on my case?"*

*"Have you had experience with this type of problem before? How recently? How often? What was involved?"*

If your problem is a common legal problem, like a divorce or employment discrimination case, you can ask:

*"What percentage of your practice is devoted to this kind of problem?"*

#### **YOUR ROLE IN THE CASE**

You have the right to be an active participant if you want to. Explain to the lawyer what you would like your role to be. People experienced in dealing with lawyers often put in a substantial amount of time assisting the lawyers in gathering evidence, lining up witnesses, and, after receiving the lawyer's advice, making final decisions about their cases. More active clients generally receive better legal service. If you can, plan to take an active role working with your lawyer. If this is what you want to do, make it clear to

the lawyer at the first interview.

At the interview, tell the lawyer what you want to:

1. *Receive a copy of all documents, letters, etc., received or written in your case at the lawyer's out-of-pocket cost, or to have these documents made available to you at his or her office;*
2. *Be informed about all developments in the case; and*
3. *Be consulted before decisions are made in the case and, in important instances, to make the decisions yourself.*

Think about how the lawyer responded to your questions, about his or her experience and about whether you will be able to work with the lawyer in the way you would like.

If you are satisfied with the interview so far, tell the lawyer everything about your problem, *including facts which may be unfavorable to you*. There are strict rules which prohibit your lawyer from repeating to anyone what you say to him or her unless you confess ongoing or planned criminal activity. Remember, your lawyer can give you a realistic explanation of what can be accomplished only if you are completely honest.

If you wish, you can ask the lawyer to explain both the positive and negative aspects of the case.

#### **A TIMETABLE FOR YOUR CASE**

Next, ask the lawyer if a timetable can be established for your case. Find out what the lawyer will be doing, and when and how you will be back in touch with each other. Most cases have a legal time limit, called the "statute of limitations," before which they must be filed or you will lose all your rights.

Regarding a timetable, you should

<sup>ask</sup>  
*Can you give me a list of events that are likely to occur in my case and a timetable for them?"*

*"Will you give me your best estimate of how long this case will take to complete?"*

*"What will you do next?"*

*"When will we talk again?"*

*"Is there a statute of limitations on the case? When does it expire?"*

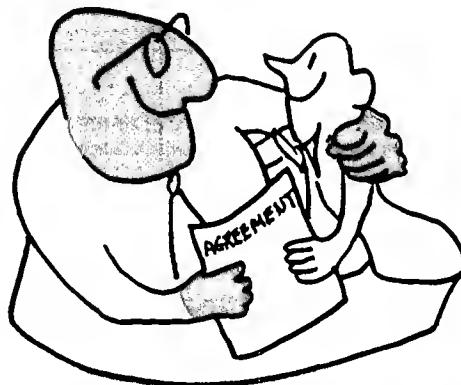
#### FEES AND PAYMENTS

Crucial to you and your lawyer's future comfort and confidence in each other is the establishment of a clear, fully understood fee and payment arrangement. Establish a fee arrangement which you clearly understand, even if your lawyer is a friend or says he or she is taking the case on a reduced-fee basis. Disagreements about fees are a very common source of dissatisfaction between lawyers and clients.

Fee arrangements vary from lawyer to lawyer, reflecting a few basic approaches. Only some of the details on fees and payments listed below will apply to your case.

At the interview, ask the lawyer to bill you on a regular basis as his or her time charges mount so that you will

Ask your attorney also to list what he or she will do in exchange for your payments.





never be surprised by the total size of the bill you receive. You can ask that the lawyer not exceed a specified amount of time devoted to your case or money spent on your case without first obtaining your permission.

Plan to re-read this section before you go to your first appointment. Read it again after you have met with the attorney for the first time, to be sure you understand how you and the attorney are handling fee and payment arrangements. Call your lawyer if you have any questions.

#### **Written Agreements**

It is important that you and your lawyer enter into a written agreement, a contract, setting forth the lawyer's charges as well as what services the lawyer expects to perform for that payment. Presently, most agreements provide only for the fee to be paid by the client. Ask your attorney also to list what he or she will do in exchange for your payment. Printed on page 23 is a model form, drawn up by the Consumers' Union. While you need not follow this form exactly, it will give you an idea of the kind of information that can be provided by a written agreement.

#### **Standard Fees**

Some attorneys and legal clinics offer fixed or standard fees for routine legal problems, such as drafting a simple will, probating an estate, handling an uncontested divorce with no property or custody issues, or executing an uncomplicated real estate settlement, etc. To see who offers standard fees for their services, you can check advertisements in the newspapers or listings in the *Lawyer Register*.

If your problem is uncomplicated, we suggest that you ask your lawyer to let you have, immediately if possible, an estimate of the total cost of the case, including expenses in excess of his or her fee. Then you can plan realistically to meet this financial obligation.

#### **Expenses NOT Covered in the Fee**

Lawyers usually expect to be reimbursed for expenses that they incur in connection with the client's case. These may include travel costs, meals away from home, telephone calls, postage and copying costs, to name a few examples. Be sure to discuss with your lawyer any expenses for which you may be charged that are not included in the fee and an estimate of how much they may be.

#### **More Complicated Cases**

##### **—Hourly Charges**

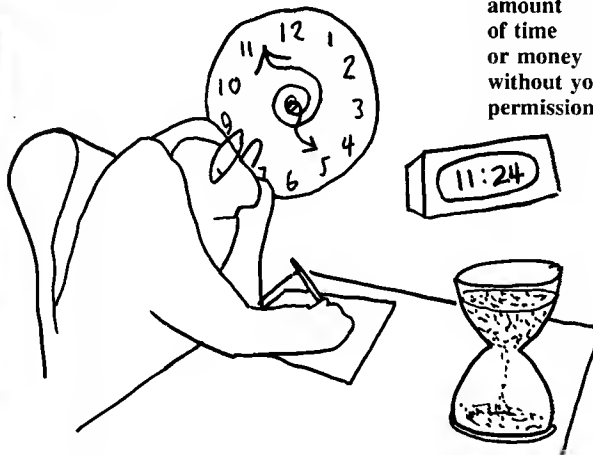
Most attorneys bill on an hourly basis. Their fees vary from \$20 per hour to over \$100 for each hour of the attorney's time. You can ask about a reduced rate if you find a lawyer you want to employ but whose fees are higher than you can afford. Again, ask your lawyer to let you have, immediately or as soon as possible, an estimate of what the total cost will be.

Lawyers usually bill for all time spent on a case, including time spent talking with a client on the telephone, time at the courthouse waiting to appear in court, etc.

Lawyers cannot always estimate how many hours a case will take. If you agree to an hourly arrangement, your written agreement should include a provision requiring that the lawyer not exceed a specified amount of time or money without obtaining your per-

sion. Insist that the lawyer keep you advised every month, or more often if necessary, of the number of hours that he or she is spending on your case. If you have any questions about this, you are also entitled to a more detailed written explanation of how those hours were spent.

Ask your lawyer not to exceed a specified amount of time or money without your permission.



#### Retainer Agreements

Some lawyers require an advance fee called a retainer. Ask the attorney what is covered by the retainer fee.

A retainer fee usually represents a number of hours of the attorney's time at his or her usual hourly rate. If the number of hours of the lawyer's work on your case exceeds the amount paid for by the retainer, he or she will bill you for the additional charges. In that case, you and your lawyer should also agree beforehand that a refund will be made if the attorney does not spend as much time as has been paid for by the retainer. You should agree on how fees and billing and payment arrangements will be handled for any amount in excess of the retainer.

Occasionally, the retainer is for a flat fee, to cover the entire cost of the lawyer's services regardless of the

amount of time the lawyer spends. In that case you may be unable to get a refund from your advance payment even if the lawyer does very little work, but you will not owe more if the lawyer underestimates the time it will take. Also determine if the fee paid for the initial consultation will be included in the retainer.

Be sure to get a receipt for fees paid in cash or by money order.

#### **Contingency Fee Cases**

In accident or personal injury cases, and in some other instances, some lawyers will agree to accept as their entire fee a percentage of the money you may receive if you win the case. If no recovery is made in the case, the client usually pays the lawyer only for expenses incurred in the case, like court fees. This is called a "contingency fee" arrangement.

In contingency fee cases, clients usually are expected to pay the court costs and other expenses, including medical expenses, out of their share of the recovery. Costs and expenses of the court case itself may be taken from the amount awarded. A few attorneys take their share of the recovery only after all expenses are paid. Before you agree to a contingency fee or to a settlement, be sure you understand as accurately as possible the exact amount of your share of the recovery that will be paid as expenses.

You may wish to try to negotiate a contingency fee arrangement with your lawyer that differs from the usual, in which the lawyer is paid one-fourth to one-half of the recovery. For example, if your medical costs, salary lost, and case-related expenses have been high, you could suggest payment first of medical costs, salary lost, and

case-related expenses, and then assign a higher percentage of the remaining recovery to the lawyer.

### **Payments**

At your first meeting with your lawyer, set out specific arrangements for payments. If you cannot pay more than a certain amount per month, be sure that ceiling is agreeable to the lawyer.

Be specific about billing, too. For example, specify if you want to be billed monthly or whenever your lawyer has spent a certain number of hours on your case. This should be included in your written fee agreement.

A small minority of attorneys charge interest on overdue bills. You should ask about this beforehand also.

Here is a checklist of questions related to fees and payments:

1. *Can you give me an estimate of how much this legal matter will cost?*
2. *Can we have a written fee agreement that sets forth not only my obligation to pay, but also exactly what you will do for me?*
3. *How often will I be billed? Will you agree to let me know when a specific dollar amount of your time has been spent on my case, so that I can authorize further payments?*
4. *Can you estimate how much court costs, witness and deposition fees and any other costs will be, aside from your fees? In what manner will I be required to pay these costs?*
5. *When will I have to pay? (Explain to the lawyer the payment schedule which is best for you.)*

Be sure you understand the cost of your legal services, and how fees are to be determined and billed. Re-read this section of the pamphlet on fees and payments. Make sure you ask and

understand the answers to any questions you may have before you agree to hire a lawyer.

- **The Decision to Hire a Lawyer**

Based on your first interview, you should consider the following factors before agreeing to hire a lawyer:

1. *Personality—Do you get along well with and trust the person?*
2. *Experience—Has the lawyer had enough experience with your type of problem?*
3. *Could you communicate effectively with the lawyer? Was he or she clear and easy to understand?*
4. *Are fees reasonable in comparison with other lawyers' charges?*
5. *Did your lawyer give clear explanations of how she or he will let you know about progress in your case?*

If you are not satisfied with this lawyer, do not hire him or her, but look elsewhere for legal help. If you are satisfied, hopefully a sound basis for working together has been established between you and your lawyer.

- **Problems With Your Lawyer**

Even if you take all of these steps before hiring a lawyer, you still may be dissatisfied with the way he or she is conducting your case. A client has the right to discharge an attorney at any time. Likewise, an attorney has the right to resign from representation of a client, but once you are in court the judge's permission may be needed. You can change lawyers, but before doing so remember that:

1. *You should first talk with your attorney and try to straighten out the problem.*

2. *Other lawyers may be more reluctant to take your case if they know you have already had another lawyer, especially if your first lawyer has a good reputation.*

3. *You probably owe the lawyer for services already rendered. A new lawyer may have to repeat and charge you again for the work already done.*

4. *Your attorney may be unwilling to return legal papers he or she has unless the fee has been paid in full, or your written fee agreement specifies that the attorney must do this if he or she stops representing you. The Consumers' Union model form suggests language which may be used to establish this (see page 23).*

5. *In a case where the court appointed the lawyer, for example in a criminal case where you cannot afford to pay for a lawyer, a judge must approve a change of lawyers.*

6. *Complaints that your attorney is seriously neglecting your case or is otherwise acting in an unprofessional manner should be made to the D.C. Bar. Also, if the statute of limitations is approaching in your case and your lawyer will not take any action, you should call the D.C. Bar. Such complaints should be made to the Bar Counsel and the Bar Board on Professional Responsibility at 638-1501, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays.*

7. *The D.C. Bar offers a service which tries to settle disagreements about the fee owed. You can contact the D.C. Bar Fee Conciliation Service at 638-1501.*

8. *The D.C. Bar also has a fund which in some cases repays clients whose attorney took funds which were theirs and misused them. You can con-*

*tact the D.C. Bar Client Security Fund at 638-1501.*

- **Conclusion**

Trust your own common sense and feelings as you look for a lawyer, interview lawyers on the phone, or finally, deal with your lawyer as a client. Asking your lawyer straightforwardly about anything you do not understand should help keep your relationship on a sound working basis.

Lawyers provide valuable services. Non-lawyers can often save themselves time, money, and trouble by consulting a lawyer before a problem becomes too serious.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee to the Bar believes that as consumers become more self-confident and knowledgeable in seeking legal services, they will consult lawyers more often, and the legal profession will be more responsive to the needs of consumers.



**SAMPLE CLIENT/LAWYER AGREEMENT**

■ This agreement is entered into by and between \_\_\_\_\_  
("Attorney") and \_\_\_\_\_ ("Client").

■ Attorney will perform the following services for Client:  
(Here specify the services to be performed.)

■ Attorney estimates that legal services required by Client will take  
approximately \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ hours and cost between  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as follows: (Here the lawyer lists hours  
and costs for handling different aspects of the case should certain  
variables occur.)

■ Disbursement costs (filing fees, deposition and transcript costs,  
transportation, etc.) will be paid by Client. Attorney estimates that  
disbursement costs will be as follows: (Here the lawyer itemizes poss-  
ible disbursement costs.)

■ Prior to undertaking work beyond that initially specified, Attorney  
will provide Client with a written estimate of the additional time, fees,  
and disbursements involved and receive written permission from  
Client to undertake the work.

■ Attorney agrees to explain the laws pertinent to Client's problem,  
the available courses of action, and the attendant risks.

■ Attorney agrees to notify Client promptly of any significant develop-  
ments and consult with Client in advance on any significant decisions.

■ Attorney agrees to send Client copy of all pertinent written materials  
sent or received by Attorney pertaining to Client's case. Client agrees  
to reimburse Attorney out-of-pocket costs for the reproduction of  
those materials.

Or:

Attorney agrees to make available to Client for reading in Attorney's  
office all written materials sent or received by Attorney pertaining to  
Client's case. At Client's request, Attorney will provide copy of any  
material to Client at Attorney's out-of-pocket costs.

■ Attorney agrees to make all reasonable efforts to answer Client's  
inquiries promptly.

■ Client agrees to pay Attorney as follows: (Here describe agreed-  
upon fee arrangement.)

■ Client may terminate this agreement, with or without cause, upon  
written notice to Attorney. Attorney shall return Client's file im-  
mediately upon Client's terminating this agreement. Termination shall  
not affect Client's responsibility to pay for legal services rendered up  
to the date of termination. Attorney may terminate this agreement for  
reasons permitted under the \_\_\_\_\_ (state) Code of Professional  
Responsibility.

■ Nothing herein contained shall be interpreted to limit or restrict the  
Attorney's professional obligations under \_\_\_\_\_ (state) Bar's  
codes or canons.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client

**LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS  
THAT PROVIDE  
REFERRALS AND/OR  
ARE SOURCES OF FREE OR  
REDUCED FEE**

**CIVIL MATTERS**

**638-1509** D.C. Bar Lawyer Referral and Information Service  
**628-9161** Neighborhood Legal Services Program  
**628-1161** Legal Aid Society of D.C.  
**638-4798** \*D.C. Law Students in Court (including landlord-tenant)  
**676-7463** \*Community Legal Clinics—George Washington University  
**265-9500** \*Urban Law Institute—Antioch School of Law  
**387-4848** \*Ayuda (Spanish-speaking, including immigration)  
**234-0970** \*Legal Counsel for the Elderly  
**651-5454** National Center for Law and the Deaf—Gallaudet College  
**265-4900** \*Operation PEP (Protection for Elderly People)—George Washington U  
**547-4747** \*University Legal Services (housing)  
**526-5800** \*Columbus Community Legal Services—Catholic University  
**887-0364** \*\*Women's Legal Defense Fund (sex discrimination, domestic relations, name change, employment discrimination, credit)

### CRIMINAL MATTERS

*(Law school clinical programs handle misdemeanors only in the D.C. Court system and misdemeanors and felonies in the Federal Court system. Many of these organizations are appointed to cases by the court and can provide referrals only.)*

- 638-4798 \*D.C. Law Students in Court (misdemeanors only)
- 624-8341 Criminal Justice Clinic—Georgetown University Law Center
- 628-1200 \*Public Defender Service (for advice only, not referrals)
- 265-9500 Antioch School of Law
- 727-5038 \*Legal Assistance Office of Superior Court (jail project)
- 624-8341 Legal Intern Program—Georgetown University Law Center
- 624-8205 \*Juvenile Justice Clinic—Georgetown University

### CIVIL RIGHTS, CIVIL LIBERTIES, AND LAW REFORM

- 544-1076 American Civil Liberties Union
- 638-4207 Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
- 686-6416 \*Equal Employment Litigation Clinic—Howard University
- 783-8150 \*National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing
- 467-5730 \*Public Defender Service—Mental Health Division
- 686-2741 National Veterans Law Center (VA Board of Veterans Appeals hearings and litigation involving veterans' issues)
- 651-5454 National Center for Law and the Deaf—Gallaudet College
- 887-0364 \*Women's Legal Defense Fund

\*Organizations marked with an asterisk provide referrals, except for the Public Defender Service, which provides primarily advice.

\*\*Organizations marked with two asterisks offer referral and counseling services.

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